Amendment to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-13. Cancelled (Without disclaimer or prejudice).

14.   (Currently Amended) A method of encoding a video signal representing a sequence of pictures to form an encoded video signal comprising temporally independent INTRA pictures and temporally predicted pictures, wherein the INTRA pictures and at least some of the temporally predicted pictures are used to form reference pictures for the temporal prediction of other pictures in the video sequence, comprising indicating an encoding order of those pictures used to form reference pictures in the encoded video signal with a sequence indicator having an independent numbering scheme, such that consecutive pictures used to form reference pictures in encoding order are assigned sequence indicator values that differ with respect to each other by a predetermined amount independent of the number of non-reference pictures encoded between successive reference pictures.

15. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein said predetermined amount is one.

16. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein the sequence indicator is included in a picture header.

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17. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 16, wherein the video signal is encoded according to the H.263 video coding standard and the sequence indicator is included in the Supplemental Enhancement Information of a bit stream of the H.263 video coding standard.

18. (Currently Amended) A method of decoding an encoded video signal representing a sequence of pictures to form a decoded video signal, the method comprising receiving an encoded video signal comprising temporally independent INTRA pictures and temporally predicted pictures, wherein the INTRA pictures and at least some of the temporally predicted pictures are used to form reference pictures for the temporal prediction of other pictures, the encoded video signal further comprising a sequence indicator having an independent numbering scheme such that consecutive reference pictures in encoding order are assigned sequence indicator values that differ with respect to each other by a predetermined amount independent of the number of non-reference pictures encoded between successive reference pictures, decoding received encoded pictures, examining each decoded picture that forms a reference picture to identify the sequence indicator value assigned to the reference picture and comparing the sequence indicator values assigned to consecutively decoded reference pictures to detect loss of a reference picture.

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18, further comprising sending a request to a transmitter to encode a picture in a non-temporally predicted manner when the sequence indicator value assigned to a particular reference picture does not follow consecutively from that associated with an immediately preceding decoded reference picture.

20. (Currently Amended) A video encoder comprising an input for receiving a video signal representing a sequence of pictures, the video encoder for generating an encoded video signal comprising temporally independent INTRA pictures and temporally predicted pictures, wherein the INTRA pictures and at least some of the temporally predicted pictures form reference pictures for temporal prediction of other pictures, and the encoder is arranged to indicate an encoding order of the reference pictures in the encoded video signal with a sequence indicator having an independent numbering scheme, such that consecutive reference pictures in encoding order are assigned sequence indicator values that differ with respect to each other by a predetermined amount independent of the number of non-reference pictures encoded between successive reference pictures.

21. (Previously Presented) A video encoder according to claim 20, wherein said predetermined amount is one.

22. (Currently Amended) A video decoder for decoding an encoded video signal representing a sequence of pictures to form a decoded video signal, the encoded video signal comprising temporally independent INTRA pictures and temporally predicted pictures, wherein the INTRA pictures and at least some of the temporally predicted pictures form reference pictures for the temporal prediction of other pictures, the encoded video signal further comprising a sequence indicator having an independent numbering scheme such that consecutive reference pictures in encoding order are assigned sequence indicator values that differ with respect to each other by a predetermined amount independent of the number of non-reference pictures encoded between successive reference pictures, comprising an input for receiving the encoded video signal and being arranged to decode received encoded pictures, to examine each decoded picture that forms a reference picture to identify the sequence indicator value assigned to the reference picture and to compare the sequence indicator values assigned to consecutively decoded reference pictures to detect loss of a reference picture.

23. (Previously Presented) A portable radio communications device including an encoder according to claim 20.

24. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein the sequence indicator is associated with a whole picture.

25. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein the sequence indicator is associated with part of a picture.

26. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 25, wherein the sequence indicator is included in a picture segment header or a macroblock header of an encoded picture.

27. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein the video signal is scalably encoded and sequence indicators are associated with layers of the scalably encoded video signal.

28. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18, wherein the predetermined amount is one.

29. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18, wherein the sequence indicator is included in a picture header.

30. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18, wherein the video signal is encoded according to the H.263 video coding standard and the sequence indicator is included in the Supplemental Enhancement Information of a bit-stream of the H.263 video coding standard.

31. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18, wherein the sequence indicator is associated with a whole picture.

32. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18, wherein the sequence indicator is associated with part of a picture.

33. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 32, wherein the sequence indicator is included in a picture segment header or a macroblock header of an encoded picture.

34. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18, wherein the video signal is scalably encoded and sequence indicators are associated with layers of the scalably encoded video signal.

35. (Previously Presented) A video encoder according to claim 20, arranged to include the sequence indicator in a picture header.

36. (Previously Presented) A video encoder according to claim 20, arranged to encoded the video signal according to the H.263 video coding standard and to include the sequence indicator in the Supplemental Enhancement Information of a bit stream of the H.263 video coding standard.

37. (Previously Presented) A video encoder according to claim 20, arranged to associate the sequence indicator with a whole picture.

38. (Previously Presented) A video encoder according to claim 20, arranged to associate the sequence indicator with part of a picture.

39. (Previously Presented) A video encoder according to claim 20, arranged to include the sequence indicator in a picture segment header or a macroblock header of an encoded picture.

40. (Previously Presented) A video encoder according to claim 20, arranged to encode the video signal scalably and to associate sequence indicators with layers of the scalably encoded video signal.

41. (Previously Presented) A video decoder according to claim 22, further arranged to send a request to a transmitter to encode a picture in a non-temporally predicted manner when the sequence indicator value assigned to a particular reference picture does not follow consecutively from that associated with an immediately preceding decoded reference picture.

42. (Previously Presented) A video decoder according to claim 22, wherein the predetermined amount is one.

43. (Previously Presented) A video decoder according to claim 22, wherein the sequence indicator is included in a picture header.

44. (Previously Presented) A video decoder according to claim 22, wherein the video signal is encoded according to the H.263 video coding standard and the sequence indicator is included in the Supplemental Enhancement Information of a bit stream of the H.263 video coding standard.

45. (Previously Presented) A video decoder according to claim 22, wherein the sequence indicator is associated with a whole picture.

46. (Previously Presented) A video decoder according to claim 22, wherein the sequence indicator is associated with part of a picture.

47. (Previously Presented) A video decoder according to claim 46, wherein the sequence indicator is included in a picture segment header or a macroblock header of an encoded picture.

48. (Previously Presented) A video decoder according to claim 22, wherein the video signal is scalably encoded and sequence indicators are associated with layers of the scalably encoded video signal.

49. (Previously Presented) A multimedia terminal device including an encoder according to claim 20.

50. (Currently Amended) An encoded video signal representing a sequence of pictures, comprising temporally independent INTRA pictures and temporally predicted pictures, wherein the INTRA pictures and at least some of the temporally predicted pictures form reference pictures for the temporal prediction of other pictures, the encoded video signal further comprising a sequence indicator having an independent numbering scheme for indicating an encoding order of the reference pictures, such that consecutive reference pictures in encoding order are assigned sequence indicator values that differ with respect to each other by a predetermined amount independent of the number of non-reference pictures encoded between successive reference pictures.

51. (Previously Presented) An encoded video signal according to claim 50, wherein said predetermined amount is one.

52. (Previously Presented) An encoded video signal according to claim 50, wherein the sequence indicator is included in a picture header.

53. (Previously Presented) An encoded video signal according to claim 50, encoded according to the H.263 video coding standard and the sequence indicator is included in the Supplemental Enhancement Information of a bit stream of the H.263 video coding standard.

54. (Previously Presented) An encoded video signal according to claim 50, wherein the sequence indicator is associated with the whole of a picture.

55. (Previously Presented) An encoded video signal according to claim 50, wherein the sequence indicator is associated with part of a picture.

56. (Previously Presented) An encoded video signal according to claim 55, wherein the sequence indicator is included in a picture segment header or a macroblock header of an encoded picture.

57. (Previously Presented) An encoded video signal according to claim 50, wherein the encoded video signal is scalably encoded and sequence indicators are associated with layers of the scalably encoded video signal.

58. (Previously Presented) A portable radio communications device including a decoder according to claim 22.

59. (Previously Presented) A multimedia terminal device including a decoder according to claim 22.